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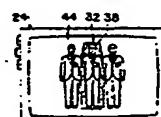
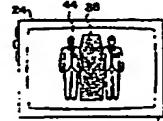
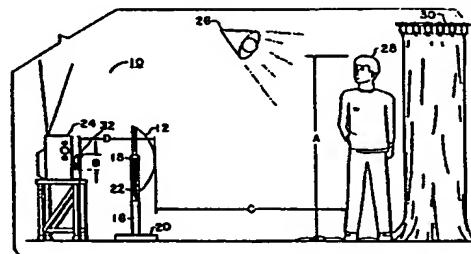
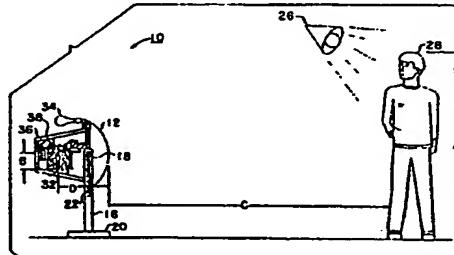
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(54) Title: TRAINING VIDEO METHOD AND DISPLAY

(57) Abstract

Method and display for training and other uses, which may be in the form of a special video, diorama, or print format. The preferred embodiment shows a bright visual image (32) against a dark background (38). This invention is particularly useful in the Illusion Apparatus of U.S. Patent 4,971,312 and in an electronic system also disclosed.



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TRAINING VIDEO METHOD AND DISPLAYBACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to an illusion apparatus and method using same. More particularly, this invention relates to a unique background display for an illusion apparatus and method for creating an illusion wherein a pre-recorded bright image on a dark background is made to appear to be inserted within the environment of the viewer. My prior U.S. Patent #4,971,312, Illusion Apparatus, discloses an optical element used in conjunction with printed matter, diorama, video, or other display means. In that patent, a dark area in the display is provided to receive the viewer's image. The present invention provides an improved display and also provides a unique format to enhance the effect provided by my prior invention.

INTRODUCTION

Aspects of this invention are applicable to various forms of display, particularly video presentations. The video presentations may be live, prerecorded, or computer generated.

The invention also particularly pertains to video created for the purpose of training an individual in some physical skill such as exercise or dance, it is not, however, limited to training and may be used for other presentations as will be clear from the following.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIGS. 1A, 1B, 1C & 1D are from prior art patent 4,971,312, herein incorporated by reference.

FIG. 2 illustrates a video screen, showing a display according to the preferred embodiment of the invention.

FIG. 3 illustrates a video screen showing a display for right or left handed training according to an alternate embodiment of the invention.

FIG. 4 illustrates a video screen showing a modified display according to the preferred embodiment of the invention.

FIG. 5 illustrates a video screen showing a follow-up display incorporating an animated dark area.

FIG. 6 illustrates an electronic system utilizing the invention.

FIG. 7 illustrates an alternative electronic system utilizing the reversed image of the invention.

5 SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

In one aspect of the invention there is provided an illusion apparatus for making an object appear to be inside or on the surface of a display. The display may be, for example, a video image on a television monitor, a printed display, or a diorama. The apparatus includes a display in which a bright image, for example, of one or more humans, such as a training instructor or instructors, or a cartoon figure or other animated figure or inanimate object, etc. appears on a dark background; and image projection means for projecting an image of an object (usually the viewer) and the environment immediately surrounding the object on the dark background of the display. As a result, the bright image appears to be inserted into the environment (e.g. living room, studio, etc.) of the object.

20 In another aspect, the invention provides a method for making a bright image of an object of a display, which may be a still or action display, appear to be inserted within the environment of a viewer of the display. The method involves the steps of providing a display in which a bright image appears on a dark (e.g. black) background, and projection of an image of the viewer and the viewer's environment onto the dark background of the display. As a result, the bright image appears to be within the environment (e.g. living room) of the viewer.

30 DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION AND PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS THEREOF

The prior art from patent 4,971,312, herein incorporated by reference, is illustrated in FIGS. 1A, 1B, 1C and 1D. In FIG. 1A the display is a diorama, while in Fig. 1B the display is a video image of a TV monitor. Darkened area 38 receives the image 32 of viewer 28. In this case, the shape of the darkened area bears no direct relation to the shape of the

viewer. The substance of the scene in the diorama does not begin at the periphery of the viewer image. In fact, the viewing environment may show as part of the composite image. This is an annoyance that can be ameliorated by vignetting the 5 darkened area in the diorama, by leaving the viewing environment unlit, or by providing a dark drape behind the viewer as shown in FIG. 1B.

In FIG. 1C, a darkened area 38 is provided in a video display. As shown in FIG. 1D, the viewer's image fits within, 10 but does not fill the darkened area. Here also, there is an ambiguous area which is neither scene nor viewer, but which can be minimized as mentioned above.

It is desirable to create a more tightly fitted insert or matte. A typical chroma-key video, for example, produces an 15 almost seamless image. Cinema technology, such as travelling mattes and digital laser scanning, also provides invisible matte lines.

Some uses of the Illusion Apparatus of patent 4,971,312, previously incorporated herein by reference, allow a display 20 format which can produce excellent quality inserts.

One way to provide well fitted inserts would be for the display's dark area to be shaped more or less like the viewer and for the viewer to move smartly to keep his/her image within the preferably moving, dark area.

25 At first glance, this does not seem likely to be practical.

It is, however, practical and useful to apply an exactly opposite strategy. It is possible to provide a perfectly fitted matte by making the dark area larger. That is, rather 30 than inserting the viewer into the display, a visual element of the display is instead inserted into the image of the viewing environment. This has several uses. For example, in the case where the display is an action (moving) display. The visual element to be inserted is preferably the image of an 35 individual, particularly that of a trainer or teacher. The trainer thus can appear to be standing beside his/her trainee, the viewer, in the viewer's living room.

FIG. 2 shows one form of the preferred training video display 100. A bright image 105 of the trainer appears on a solid black background 110. In order for certain activities to seem natural to the majority of viewers and particularly 5 where an activity has only one asymmetrical form, the preferred embodiment requires that the trainer's image be left-right reversed. This is in order that the viewer's mirror image can follow the trainer's lead. Ballroom dancing and the manual of arms are particular examples.

10 The reversal may be accomplished electronically or the video shot through a mirror.

Although a video, made using a video camera, is the preferred form of display, other video storage means, such as a laser disc, or still ("non-action" type) displays, such as, 15 print, diorama or other display means are possible. A computer generated display, with an assumed camera position is also possible. A matte black box could hold a marionette for insertion into the image of a child's playroom. The marionette could appear as large as the child's image. The 20 background need not, of course, be absolutely and completely black, but could contain, for example, the image of a strip of grass, to support a golf lesson.

The dark background might also contain additional visual elements to be inserted. As non-limiting but illustrative 25 examples, reference may be made to other bright objects, such as bits of fairy dust to accompany a visit from Peter Pan or a shower of stars from a fairy godmother's wand. It is, however, preferable that at least a majority (at least 50%) of the display's area and/or perimeter be dark.

30 The viewer thus has a wide latitude in position, while the composite image appears to be seamless.

To add to the illusion, it is usually preferable that the 35 trainer or other inserted visual element address the dark space beside him/her/it rather than follow the usual practice of addressing the camera. Thus, the bright image 105 of the trainer has the trainer's head turned to address the viewer's image rather than the viewer.

The illusion effect may also be enhanced by setting the camera elevation in making the display image to the elevation expected for the viewer imaging device to be used at the time of viewing.

5 FIG. 3 shows a training video display 100, which is preferred for training in activities such as golf or tennis in which handedness varies and is important. Here, dark background 110 holds two bright images 105A and 105B. Image 105A is a reversed, left handed trainer, 105B is the 10 unreversed image of the same trainer.

For use with the Illusion Apparatus of patent 4,971,312, the viewer may cover one image with a black drape or other cover and use the other image as the trainer, or a video switch may be made by ordinary means to delete the undesired 15 portion (e.g. one-half) of the visual field.

FIG. 4 illustrates a modified form of the preferred embodiment which enhances the apparent interaction between the bright image 105 of the display 100 and the viewer's image to be inserted.

20 Here the bright image 105 is interrupted in the area of the background 110 where the viewer's image is likely to be found. This can be accomplished electronically or by a black drape or mask during production of the display 100. Although the interrupted edge will not likely be at all a precise matte 25 line, the accuracy of the remaining edge and a preferably brief time of interaction can form a convincing element of the illusion. For best results the interrupted edge should be vignetted.

30 The apparatus of this invention and method of creating an illusion includes image projection means for juxtaposing the bright image of the display and the image of the external object (e.g. viewer) and environment of the object. The image projection means, in one embodiment, is that described in my prior issued U.S. Patent 4,971,312, incorporated herein by 35 reference. Briefly, the image projection means includes a partially reflective, partially transparent convex mirror located between the object and the display. The mirror is convex in the direction of the display so as to diminish the size of the projected image of the object, whereby the bright

image appears to be within the environment of the object. For further details, reference is made to U.S. Patent 4,971,312.

The training video and other applications wherein visual elements are to be inserted into the image of the viewer's environment do not, however, require the use of the image projection means of the Illusion Apparatus disclosed in patent 4,971,312, but permit application with an electronic display and video imaging system.

FIG. 6 shows an electronic system 1000 which can use the training videos disclosed herein. This system is compatible with video produced for use with the Illusion Apparatus of the prior art and is preferred for large video displays.

An ordinary VCR 1100 (VHS, Super VHS, 8mm, etc.) is used to play a prerecorded videotape bearing the bright image 1005 of the trainer, storyteller, fairy godmother or other visual element against a black background. Instead of an ordinary VCR a laser disc player or CD Rom player, etc. may be used to provide the display according to this invention. The image of the display is delivered to luminance key 1300 by ordinary means.

Video camera 1200 captures the image 1050 of viewer 1250 within the image of the viewing environment 1060. The image of viewer and environment is also delivered by ordinary means to luminance key 1300.

Luminance key 1300 includes means, well known in the art, to cause left-right reversal of the image from camera 1200, inserts the reversed image into the dark area of the image from VCR 1100, and transmits the composite image to video monitor 1400, all by ordinary means. Alternatively, the left-right reversal means may be provided as a separate unit connectable to the luminance key and to the video camera or VCR in any desired order. As still a further alternative, the left-right reversal means may be included in the video monitor, and such types of monitors are also commercially available.

Because of the left-right reversal, the video system 1000 acts like a mirror, rather than like ordinary video. This can also be accomplished by optical means, as by a prism or mirror in front of the camera lens, but in any case provides a

reversed image. The reversed image is far easier than a true image for the viewer to understand and imitate while attempting to follow the trainer.

This is true for insertions of the viewer, with or
5 without the viewer's environment, into a composite image to be
watched by the viewer. Other methods of insertion to which
this could be applied include chroma-key and the difference
key of Barnett et al patent 4,800,432, incorporated herein by
reference thereto.

10 FIG. 7 shows a proposed method of image insertion which
could also benefit, for the viewer's convenience, in following
an activity, from reversal of the inserted image.

Camera 2200 captures the viewer's image in both visible
light and infra-red. Both images are transmitted to infra-red
15 key 2300. Also transmitted to infra-red key 2300 is a video
image from VCR 1100.

In this case, video monitor 1400 produces a composite
image of the reversed image 1050 of the viewer 1250 inserted
into a prepared image including not only a bright image or
20 images 1005, but also a bright prepared background 2060. This
is accomplished by keying the image from VCR 1100 into the
cold or non-viewer areas of the infra-red signal from camera
2200 and by keying the visible light signal from camera 2200
into the warm areas of the infra-red signal.

25 The system of FIG. 7 also allows electronic tracking of
the viewer and is, in that respect, similar to chroma-key and
difference key.

Use of a training video, particularly as described in the
preferred embodiment of FIG. 2, can make possible well fitted
30 inserts as discussed earlier. Once the viewer has learned a
specific series of movements, the black background can give
way to a less dark or bright scene. The bright scene is
interrupted only in a small dark area which follows the
prescribed motions previously learned by the viewer.

35 FIG. 5 shows a display 200 utilizing a small dark area
111 within an otherwise bright scene 115. An especially
strong illusion of interaction is presented by including image
elements "before" and "behind" the dark area.

The preferred method of creating a dark area for this display format is to dress an actor totally in black and for the actor to follow the prescribed motions to be learned by the viewer from the preferred embodiment of the invention.

5 While the invention has been described with reference to preferred embodiments thereof, it will be appreciated by those of ordinary skill in the art that modifications can be made to the invention without departing from the spirit and scope thereof.

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1 Claim 1. An illusion apparatus for making an object
2 appear to be inside of or on the surface of a display, said
3 apparatus comprising:

4 a display comprising a bright image on a dark background;
5 image projection means for projecting an image of an
6 object and the environment immediately surrounding the object
7 on the dark background of said display, whereby the bright
8 image appears to be inserted into the environment surrounding
9 the object.

1 Claim 2. The illusion apparatus of claim 1 which further
2 comprises

3 display means for generating said display, wherein said
4 display is an animated display wherein said bright image moves
5 across said dark background.

1 Claim 3. The illusion apparatus of claim 2 wherein said
2 display means comprises video storage means.

1 Claim 4. The illusion apparatus of claim 3 wherein said
2 video storage means comprises a video tape.

1 Claim 5. The illusion apparatus of claim 3 wherein said
2 image projection means comprises a luminance key adapted to be
3 operatively connected to the output signal of a video camera
4 and to the output signal of a video player adapted to receive
5 and play said video tape, and wherein said apparatus further
6 comprises means for operatively connecting said luminance key
7 to the input of a television monitor, whereby the image of the
8 object and its environment is keyed to the dark background of
9 the display.

1 Claim 6. The illusion apparatus of claim 3 which further
2 comprises means for left-right reversal of the projected image
3 of the object.

1 Claim 7. The illusion apparatus of claim 6 wherein the
2 luminance key and left-right reversal means are operatively
3 connected to each other and are housed within a single unit
4 and where said unit includes means for sending the luminance
5 keyed and left-right reversed image of the object and the
6 display to a television monitor.

1 Claim 8. The illusion apparatus of claim 1 wherein said
2 image projection means comprises
3 a partially reflective, partially transparent convex
4 mirror located between the object and the display for making
5 an image of the object and its environment appear to interact
6 with the display, said mirror being convex in the direction of
7 the object so as to diminish the size of the projected image
8 of the object, whereby the bright image appears to be within
9 the environment of the object.

1 Claim 9. The illusion apparatus of claim 1 wherein the
2 dark background comprises at least 50% of the display area.

1 Claim 10. The illusion apparatus of claim 1 wherein the
2 dark background comprises at least 50% of the perimeter of the
3 display.

1 Claim 11. The illusion apparatus of claim 1 wherein the
2 display comprises a diorama.

1 Claim 12. The illusion apparatus of claim 1 wherein the
2 display comprises a printed display.

1 Claim 13. The illusion apparatus of claim 3 wherein the
2 bright image is of at least a first human.

1 Claim 14. The illusion apparatus of claim 13 wherein the
2 display further comprises a second bright image which is of a
3 human which is a right-left reversal of the first human.

1 Claim 15. A method for making a bright image of a display
2 appear to be inserted within the environment of a viewer of
3 the display, comprising the steps of:

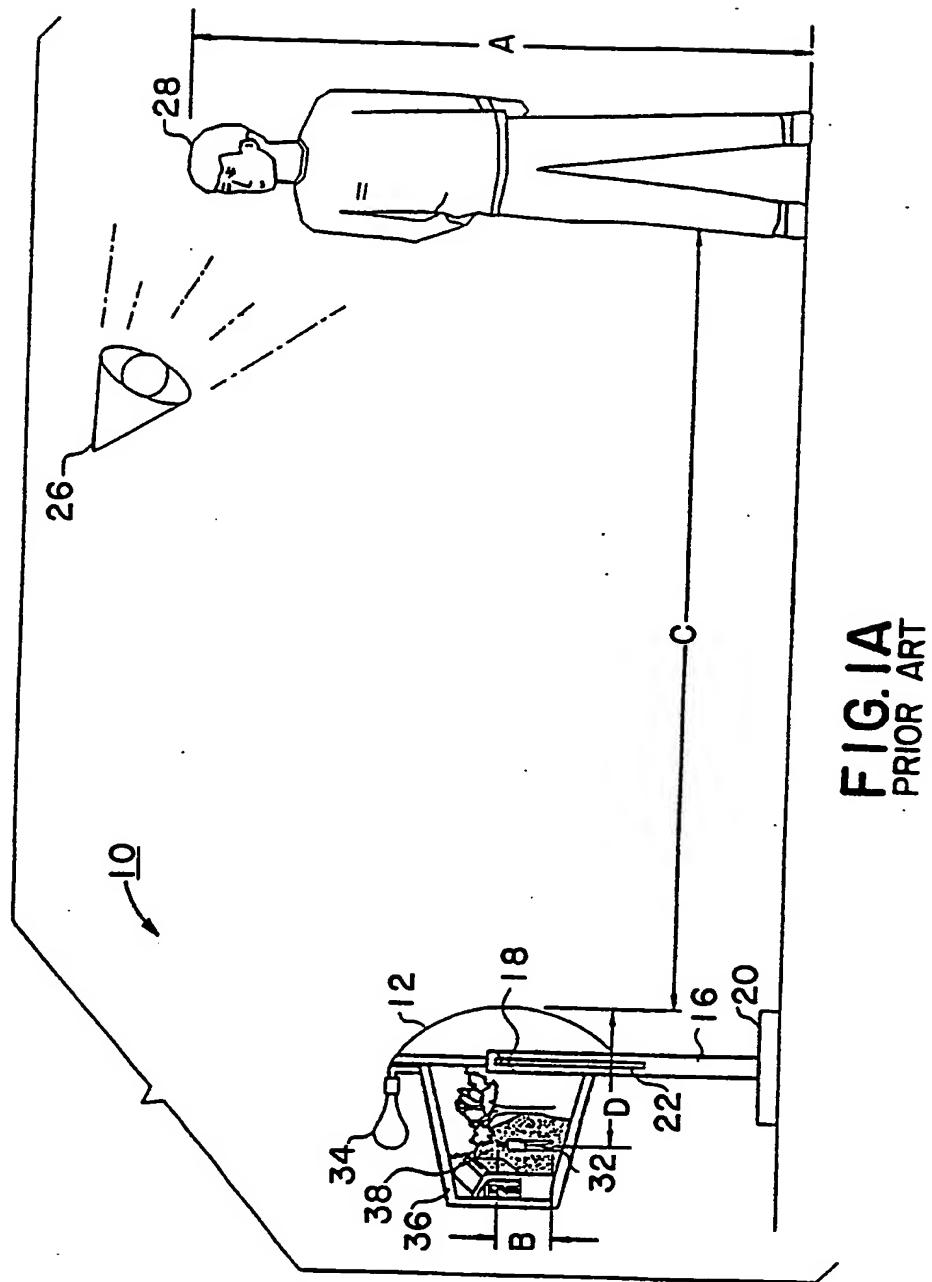
4 providing a display comprising the bright image on a
5 dark background, and

6 projecting an image of the viewer and the viewer's
7 environment onto the dark background of the display, whereby
8 the bright image appears to be within the environment of the
9 viewer.

1 Claim 16. The method of claim 15 wherein the display is
2 an animated video display which comprises transmitting a video
3 image of the display to a television monitor, taking a video
4 image of the viewer and the viewer's environment, and
5 transmitting the video image of the viewer and the viewer's
6 environment to the television monitor, whereby the video image
7 of the bright image appears within the environment of the
8 viewer on the television monitor.

1 Claim 17. The method of claim 16 which further comprises
2 transmitting the video image of the display and the video
3 image of the viewer and the viewer's environment to a
4 luminance keying device to insert the image of the viewer and
5 the viewer's environment onto the dark background of the
6 display, and transmitting the signal from the luminance keying
7 device to the television monitor.

1 Claim 18. The method of claim 17 which further comprises
2 left-right reversing the image of the viewer.



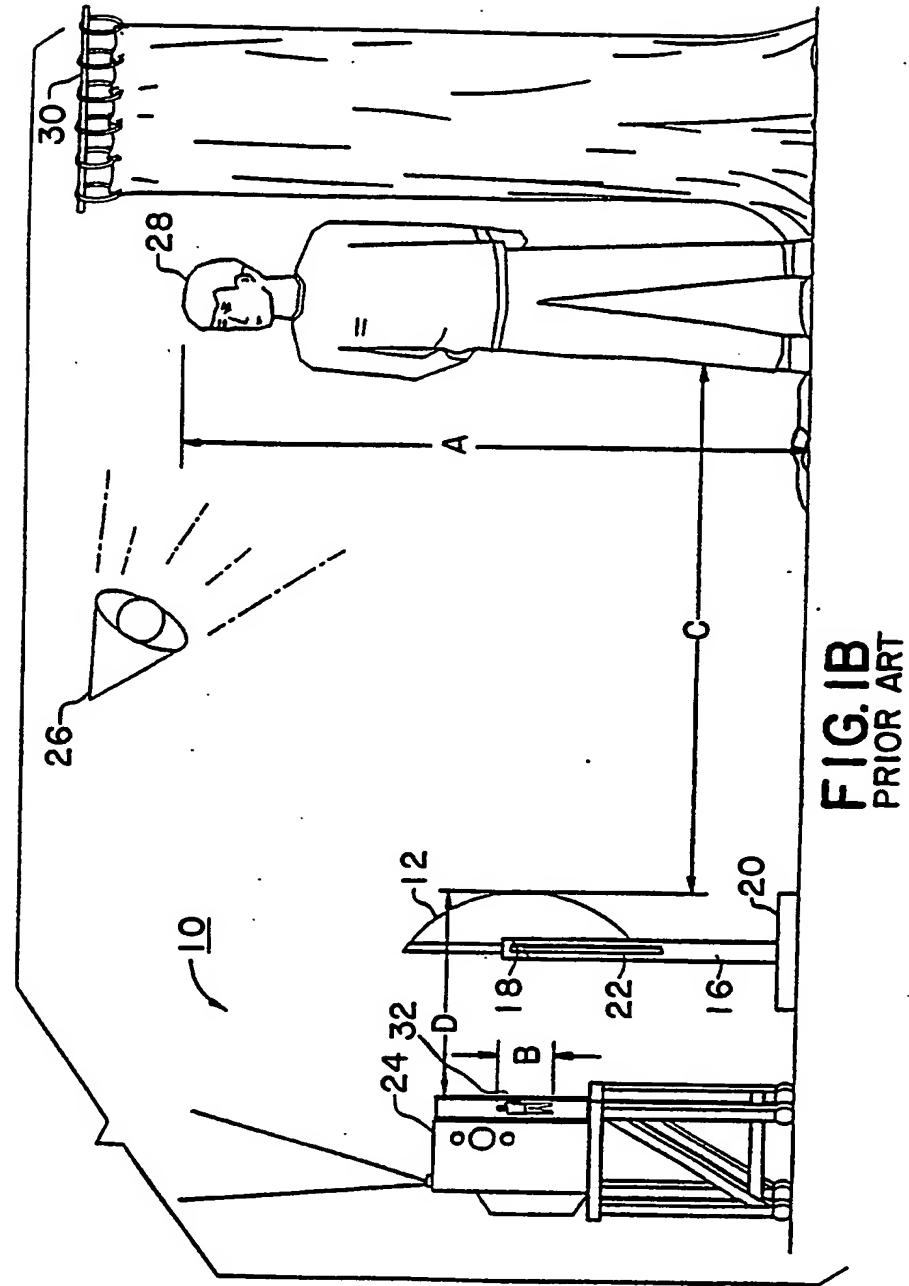


FIG. IB
PRIOR ART

FIG. IC
PRIOR ART

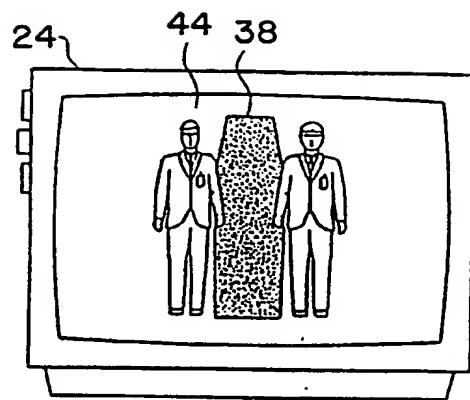
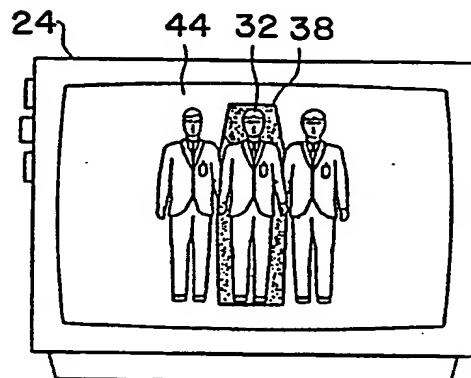


FIG. ID
PRIOR ART



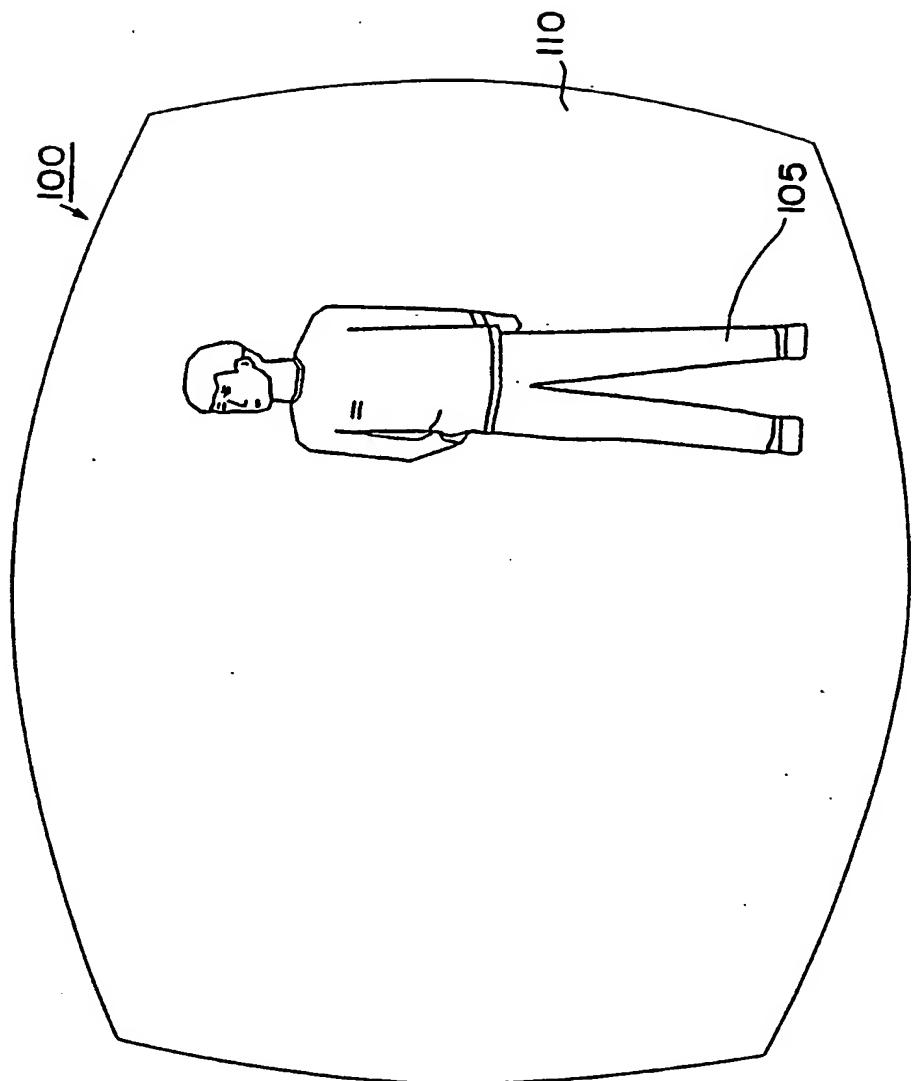


FIG. 2

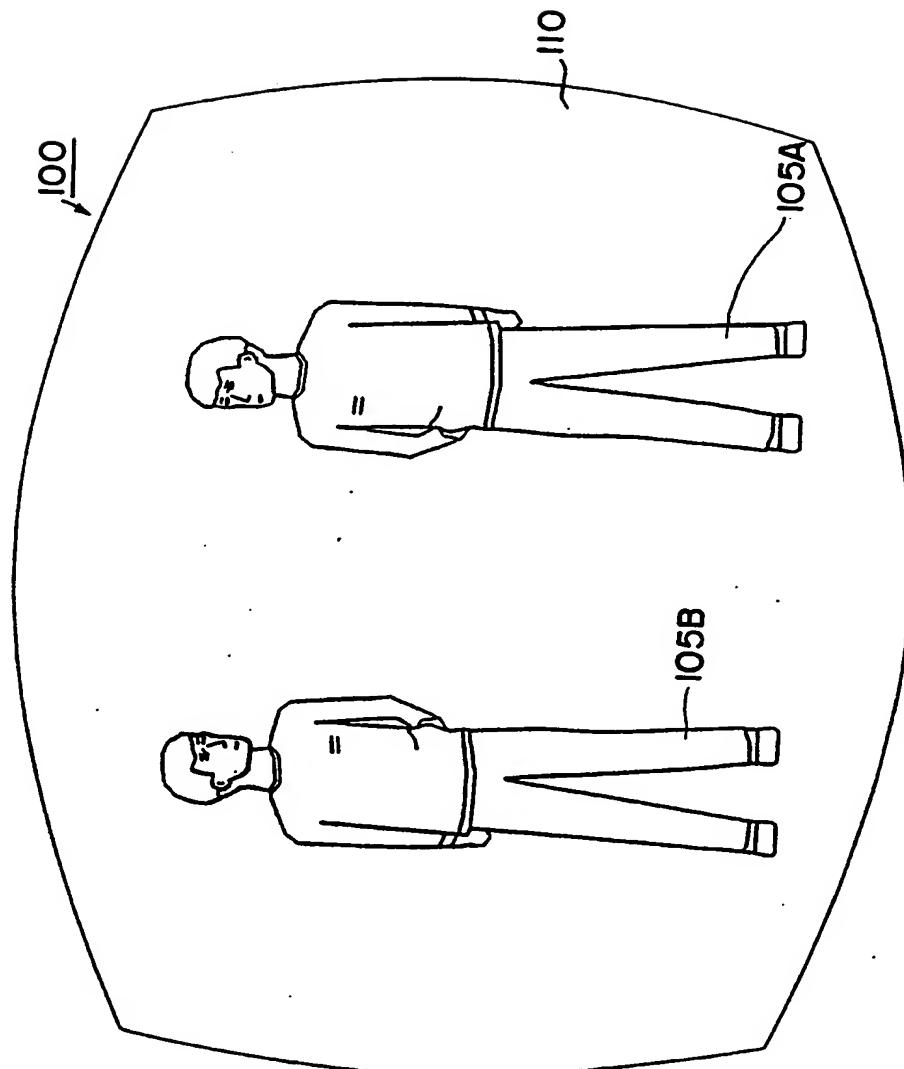


FIG. 3

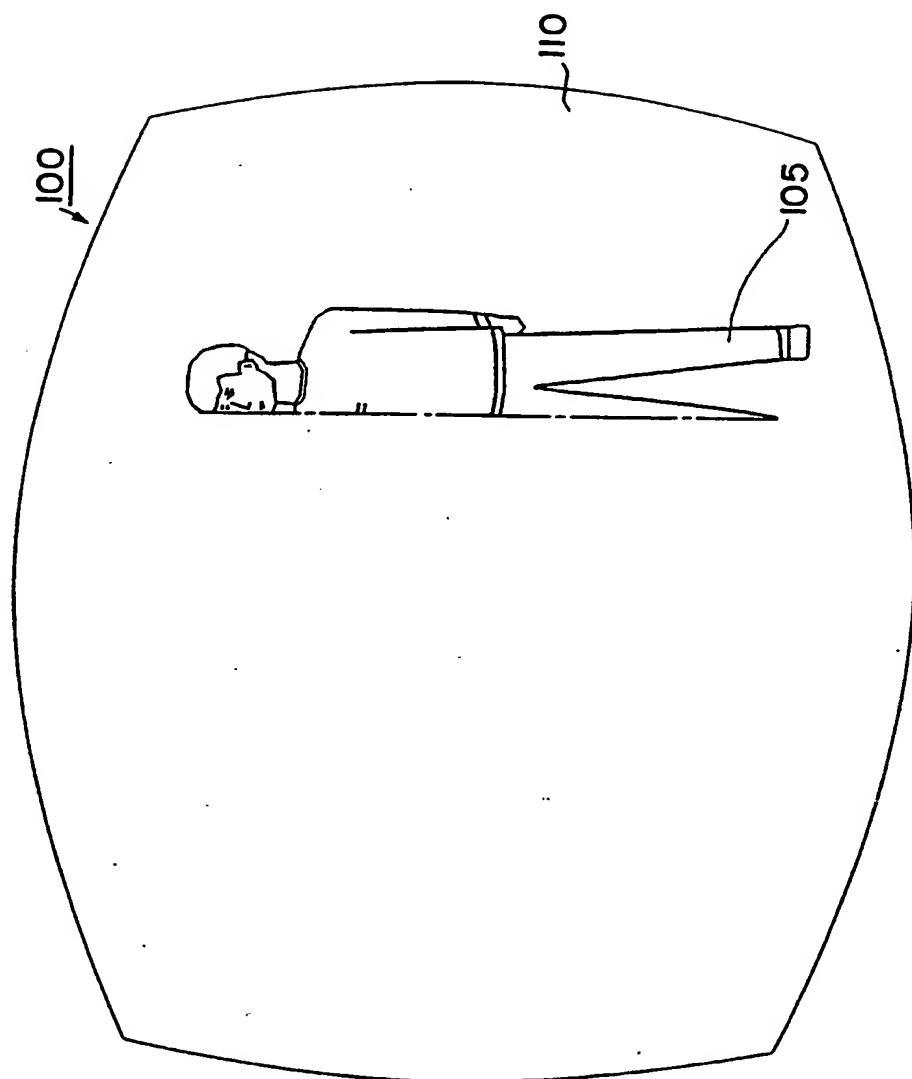


FIG. 4

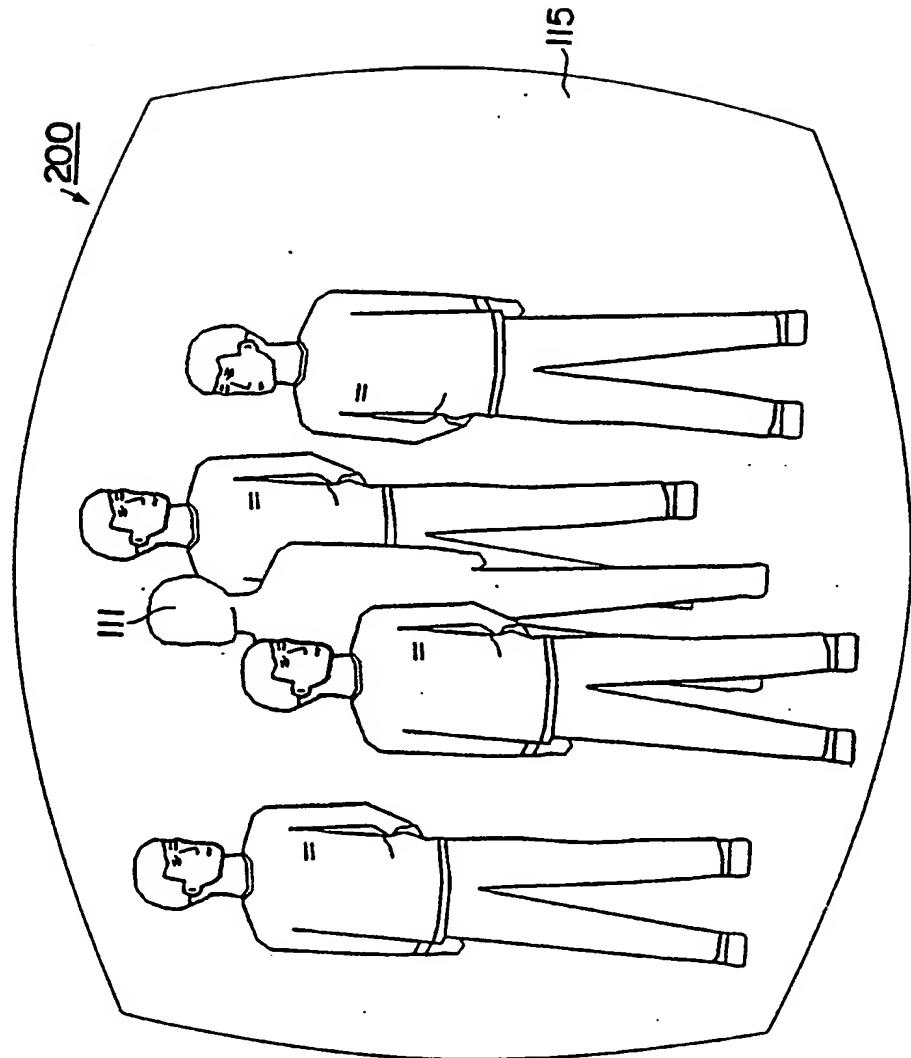
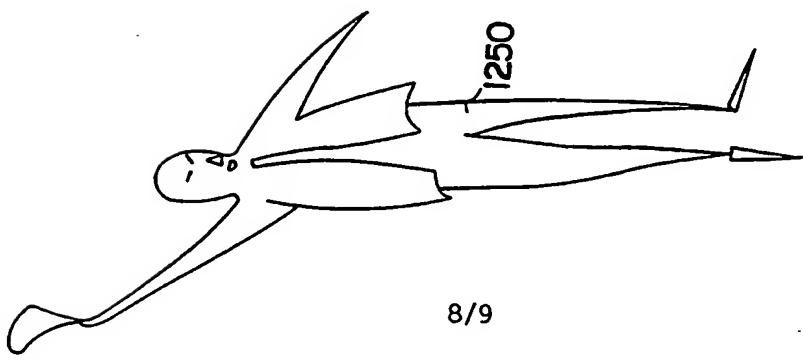
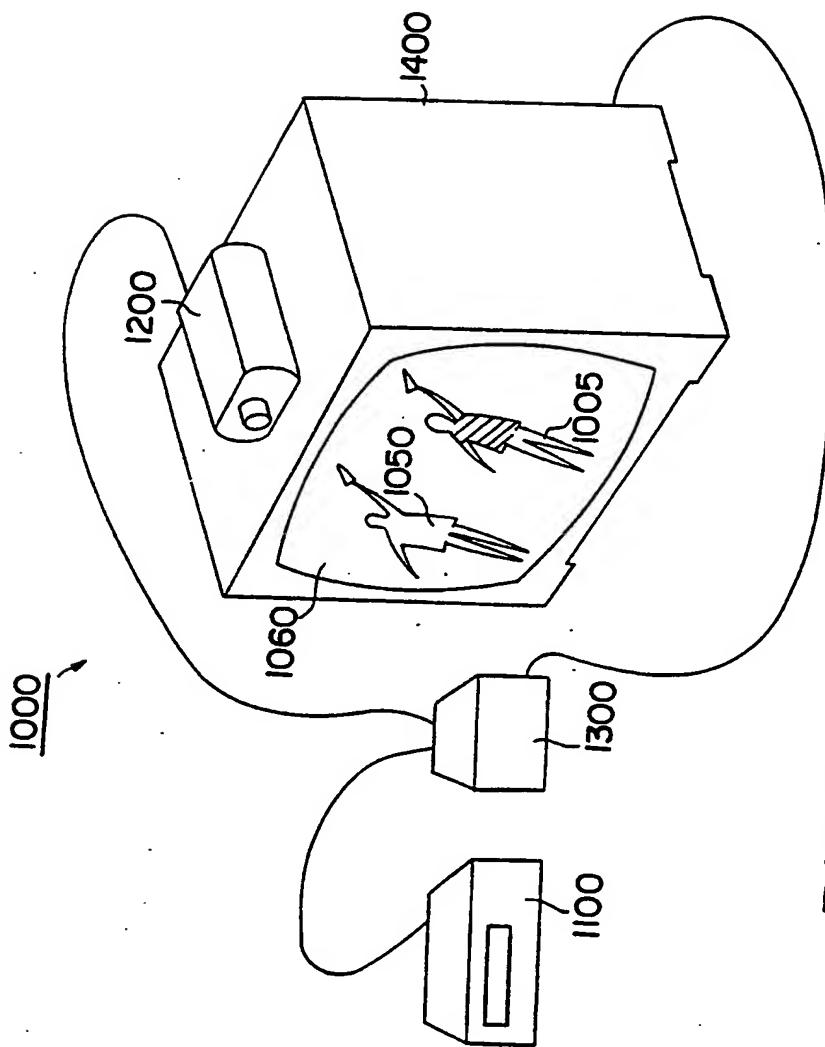


FIG. 5



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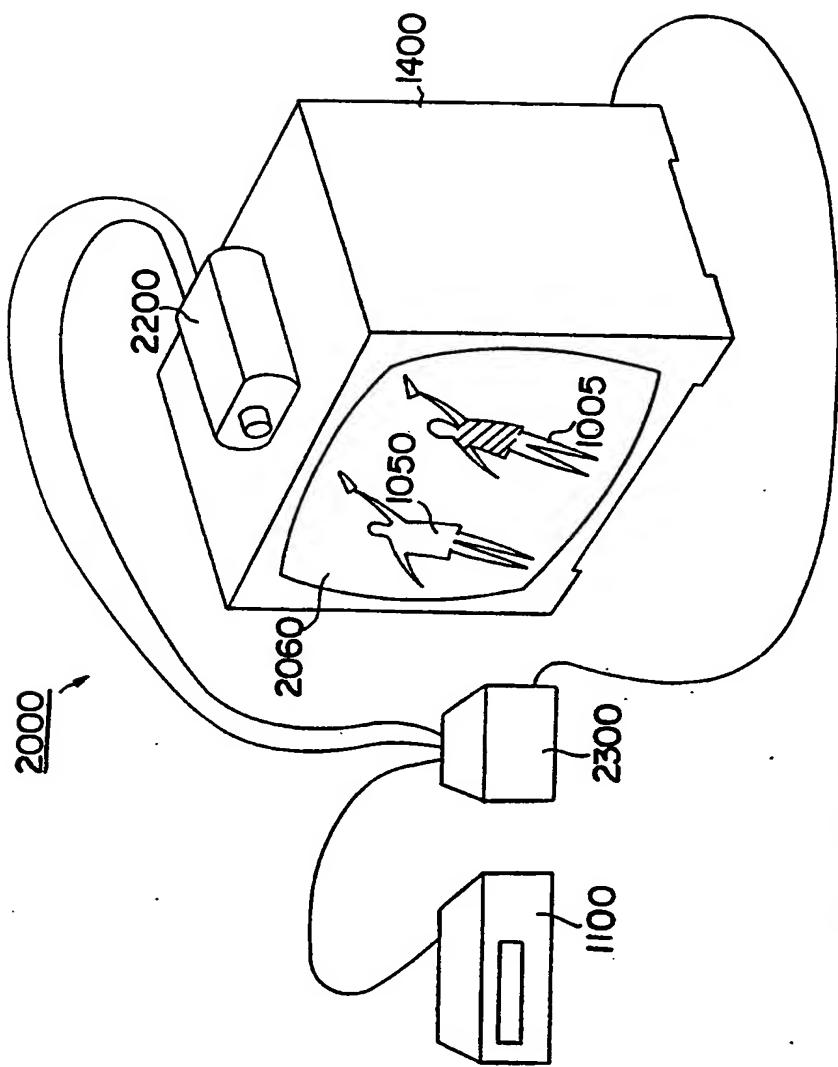
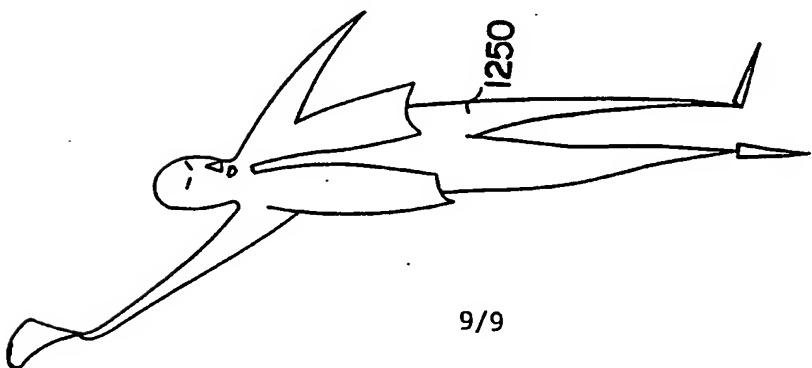


FIG. 7



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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No. PCT/US94/09084

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

IPC(5) :G02B 5/08

US CL :472/61

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

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Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
A	US, A, 4,971,312(WEINREICH) 20 NOVEMBER 1990, ENTIRE DOCUMENT	1-18

Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.

See patent family annex.

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Date of mailing of the international search report

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